United Nations ST/SGB/2009/13

Secretariat

1 October 2009

Secretary-General's Bulletin

Organization of the Department of Political Affairs

The Secretary-General, pursuant to Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5, entitled "Organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations", as amended by ST/SGB/2002/11, and for the purpose of establishing the organizational structure of the Department of Political Affairs, promulgates the following:

Section 1
General provision

The present bulletin shall apply in conjunction with Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5, entitled "Organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations", as amended by ST/SGB/2002/11.

Section 2
Functions and organization

2.1 The Department of Political Affairs:

(a) Provides advice and support to the Secretary-General and the United Nations system in the discharge of the Secretariat's global responsibilities related to the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, including early warning, political mediation and post-conflict peacebuilding, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and under the mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council. The Department is the lead unit of the United Nations for political analysis, mediation and political guidance since they relate to the Organization's efforts towards preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding. In the context of Department-led operations, the Department contributes this expertise, in particular with regard to electoral support, mediation support and regional and other longer-term perspectives, through its participation in integrated mission task forces and other consultation mechanisms; in the context of peacebuilding, this expertise will be provided in close collaboration with the Peacebuilding Support Office;

(b) Provides the Secretary-General with advice and support in the political aspects of his or her relations with Member States and other intergovernmental organizations, especially regional organizations with which the United Nations cooperates. Where the Department leads an integrated operation, this advice will be provided through the Department. In the context of activities related to

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peacekeeping, under Chapter VIII of the Charter, such advice is provided in consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, where such consultations would be relevant and applicable;

(c) Serves as the lead Department of the United Nations for electoral assistance matters. Provides the Secretary-General and the United Nations system with advice and support on electoral assistance matters and ensures appropriate consideration of and response to requests by Member States for such assistance. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs is the focal point for United Nations electoral assistance activities, system-wide;

(d) Directs, manages and provides political and policy guidance and strategic direction to all Department-led missions funded from the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget, which have, as a core element of their mandates, peacemaking, mediation or peacebuilding. The above are hereinafter collectively referred to as missions;

(e) Provides substantive support and secretariat services to the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies;

(f) Provides substantive support to the General Assembly and its relevant subsidiary organs, including the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Special Committee of 24) and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

2.2 The Department is divided into organizational units, as described in the present bulletin.

2.3 The Department is headed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. The Under-Secretary-General and the officials in charge of each organizational unit perform, in addition to the specific functions set out in the present bulletin, the general functions applicable to their positions, as set out in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5, as amended by ST/SGB/2002/11, and constitute the Department's senior management team.

2.4 To ensure coherent and, where appropriate, integrated United Nations approaches, including in missions under the leadership of the Department of Political Affairs, as well as strategic and operational coordination with United Nations and non-United Nations partners, the Department maintains, leads or contributes to the following mechanisms and arrangements:

(a) An integrated process for strategic assessments, incorporating all relevant United Nations system partners, to support the planning and conduct of initiatives to prevent, manage and resolve armed conflict, including missions under the leadership of the Department of Political Affairs;

(b) Integrated task forces providing integrated operational guidance and support in the planning and conduct of missions;

(c) Regular strategic dialogue and exchange with United Nations system partners through meetings of the Secretary-General's Policy Committee, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs) and other relevant senior management forums;

(d) A service-level agreement with the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support to provide direction on all issues pertaining to United Nations field-based missions under the leadership of the Department of Political Affairs;

(e) Modalities for operational cooperation in the implementation of mandated responsibilities for cross-cutting activities;

(f) Strategic cooperation frameworks and regular communication with regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions on issues related to the prevention, management and resolution of armed conflict;

(g) Modalities for coordination and, where appropriate, provision of support to initiatives undertaken by United Nations and non-United Nations partners to prevent, manage and resolve armed conflict;

(h) Modalities for the provision of capacity-building and operational support by the United Nations to non-United Nations partners engaged in efforts to prevent, manage and resolve armed conflict;

(i) Modalities for the implementation of multidimensional presences and joint initiatives with non-United Nations partners.

Section 3
Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs

3.1 The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs is accountable to the Secretary-General.

3.2 The Under-Secretary-General is responsible for all the activities of the Department of Political Affairs, as well as its administration. The Under-Secretary-General provides the Secretary-General with advice and support on all political matters; oversees and provides political guidance and instructions to special envoys/representatives of the Secretary-General and other field representatives deployed under the Department's leadership; directs and manages, on behalf of the Secretary-General, goodwill, fact-finding and other missions; undertakes, on behalf of the Secretary-General, diplomatic activities relating to the prevention, control and resolution of disputes, including preventive diplomacy, political mediation, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding; convenes and chairs the Executive Committee on Peace and Security; acts as the focal point in the Secretariat for all matters related to electoral assistance; and directs, through two Assistant Secretaries-General, the provision of substantive support and secretariat services to the Security Council and the General Assembly and to relevant subsidiary organs, including the Special Committee of 24 and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

Section 4
Office of the Under-Secretary-General

4.1 The Office of the Under-Secretary-General is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the Under-Secretary-General.

4.2 The core functions of the Office are as follows:

(a) Monitoring the implementation of the substantive workplan of the Department, including policy coordination and advocacy, business continuity, self-monitoring and self-evaluation, and risk management;

(b) Advising the Under-Secretary-General on departmental policies and guidelines and dealing with specific substantive and administrative policy and management issues;

(c) Preparing reports and notes on political and managerial issues for consideration by the Under-Secretary-General;

(d) Acting as a focal point for information on all aspects of the work of the Department;

(e) Coordinating interdepartmental and inter-agency activities and undertaking the necessary follow-up;

(f) Consulting, negotiating and coordinating with other departments, offices, funds and programmes on matters of mutual concern;

(g) Coordination and oversight of the Department's biennial budget and the annual budgets of missions administered by the Department;

(h) Liaising with the various divisions in resource mobilization for extrabudgetary activities;

(i) Managing media relations in coordination with the Office of the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General and the Department of Public Information, strategic and corporate communications, and supporting the public information activities of missions;

(j) Representing or arranging for representation of the Department at meetings, as required;

(k) Overseeing the activities of the Executive Office, the various divisions, units and departmental teams or working groups established under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General;

(l) Liaising with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and other departments in the preparation of notes, briefing materials and talking points for the Secretary-General.

Section 5
Assistant Secretaries-General

5.1 The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in the performance of his or her activities, is assisted by two Assistant Secretaries-General. The Assistant Secretaries-General are accountable to the Under-Secretary-General and support the Under-Secretary-General in guiding and supervising the work of the Department's divisions and units related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, post-conflict peacebuilding, decolonization, the question of Palestine, and in supporting the Security Council and its subsidiary organs. They also support the Under-Secretary-General in the administration and management of the Department.

5.2 In addition to assisting the Under-Secretary-General in fulfilling the responsibilities set forth in section 3 above, the two Assistant Secretaries-General, with the support of their respective offices, have the following main responsibilities:

(a) Providing leadership for the Department's conflict prevention and conflict management efforts, in particular through the development and implementation of integrated conflict prevention and conflict management strategies;

(b) Identifying opportunities for utilizing the Department's mediation and mediation support role;

(c) Ensuring strong institutional capacity to serve effectively as the political arm of the Secretary-General and the United Nations system, based on a department-wide human resources strategy;

(d) Developing effective working relationships with other United Nations departments, agencies, offices, funds and programmes on all issues relevant to the work of the Department;

(e) Providing leadership for maintaining strategic partnerships with international regional and subregional organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and think tanks.

Section 6
Regional divisions

6.1 There are six regional divisions: two for Africa, reporting to Assistant Secretary-General I; and one for Asia and the Pacific, one for the Middle East and West Asia, one for Europe and one for the Americas reporting to Assistant Secretary-General II. Each regional division is headed by a Director or a Chief. The Director or Chief is responsible for managing a division and for ensuring adequate division of responsibilities among staff. Each Director is assisted by a Deputy who stands in for the Director when absent, and who has lead responsibilities for staffing, budget and other core administrative and management duties. Where divisions are headed by a Chief, the Chief may delegate this function to a Senior Political Affairs Officer.

6.2 The core functions of the divisions are as follows:

(a) Identifying potential crisis areas and providing early warning to the Secretary-General on developments and situations affecting international peace and security;

(b) Preparing correspondence, briefing materials and talking points for the Secretary-General and taking the record of meetings between the Secretary-General and representatives of Governments, regional organizations and other leaders;

(c) Planning and participating in fact-finding, peacemaking and other missions to areas of actual or potential conflicts where the Secretary-General's preventive and peacemaking efforts may be needed or are already engaged;

(d) Providing political guidance and support to special representatives and other senior officials appointed by the Secretary-General to assist in his or her efforts in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. In the context of peacekeeping operations, the divisions contribute political advice to assist the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in its overall guidance and support to field operations under its responsibility, through consultation mechanisms such as the integrated mission task forces;

(e) Implementing mission mandates, including backstopping and administrative and political support for Department-led missions and regional political offices, with a view to supporting conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction;

(f) Advising the Secretary-General, through the Department's senior management, in giving overall political direction to post-conflict peacebuilding efforts and, to that end, providing guidance to United Nations programmes, funds and agencies. In the context of peacebuilding, this guidance and support will be provided in close collaboration with the Peacebuilding Support Office. Where the Department is responsible for field-based missions, the regional divisions will act as an effective liaison to ensure that non-resident specialized agency programming and capacity can be applied in relevant post-conflict situations;

(g) Preparing for the Secretary-General and his or her senior officials analytical briefs and in-depth studies, focused on emerging trends bearing on peace and security, with advice and/or recommendations, where appropriate, for possible action by the Organization;

(h) Contributing to activities of the United Nations system on issues of governance and democratization;

(i) Providing, in coordination with the Decolonization Unit, substantive support to the General Assembly, the Trusteeship Council and the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, including the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and the Special Committee of 24;

(j) Preparing reports of the Secretary-General to transmit to the General Assembly and the Security Council;

(k) Maintaining and developing cooperation with the secretariats of regional organizations and arrangements through joint meetings, consultations, liaison and attendance at meetings held by them;

(l) Maintaining liaison, consulting and negotiating with Member States at Headquarters or in their capitals;

(m) Maintaining and expanding liaison with other United Nations departments and offices and other relevant institutes and experts;

(n) Maintaining liaison with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions worldwide and participating in seminars and academic meetings relating to the mandate of the Department.

Section 7
Policy, mediation and regional organizations units

7.1 The policy, mediation and regional organizations units are managed by individual team leaders reporting to a Chief who is accountable to the Under-Secretary-General. The team leaders are responsible for managing their respective units and for ensuring adequate division of responsibilities among staff. The team leaders have lead responsibilities for staffing, budget and other core administrative duties.

7.2 The core functions of the units are as follows:

(a) Coordinating the development of policy options, undertaking background research and drafting analytical papers and documents on cross-cutting peace and security issues or emerging questions relevant to the work of the Department, and supporting the Department in developing its own guidance for Headquarters and field mission activities and other core programmes, and preparing talking points and briefing materials, as required;

(b) Providing a focal point for the policy units of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as for similar entities in other departments and United Nations agencies, and for inter-agency policymaking with regard to preventive action, peacemaking and peacebuilding;

(c) Taking the lead to develop, maintain, disseminate and periodically revise departmental policy and guidance, best practices and knowledge management frameworks that support and guide the Department's Headquarters staff and all field missions and other core programmes;

(d) Maintaining a strategy to enhance the Department's capacity with regard to its core activities of information collection, analysis, early warning, preventive action, peacemaking, and post-conflict peacebuilding, in particular overseeing a systematic training and capacity-building programme based on the Department's guidance and knowledge management frameworks;

(e) Developing systematic links with outside academic institutions, research centres, think tanks and foreign policy forums to strengthen the Department's policy formulation capacity, and organizing academic meetings on topical or substantive issues in collaboration with regional divisions;

(f) Providing a focal point for and supporting regional divisions and other departments on United Nations cooperation and partnerships with regional and other organizations, and preparing the biannual report of the Secretary-General on these activities;

(g) Providing mediation support to meet the growing demand for professional, cross-cutting support to "good offices" activities, including preventive diplomacy and the formal mediation of disputes. This includes expert advice, best practices and knowledge management of mediation-related activities worldwide, serving the United Nations as a whole, as well as regional organizations and other peacemaking bodies, supporting ongoing mediation efforts with country/region-specific operational support, as well as institutional and capacity-building activities.

Section 8
Electoral Assistance Division

8.1 The Electoral Assistance Division is headed by a Director who is accountable to the Under-Secretary-General. The Director is responsible for managing the Division and for ensuring adequate division of responsibilities among staff. The Director is assisted by one Deputy Director who stands in for the Director when the Director is absent and who has lead responsibilities for staffing, budget and other core administrative duties.

8.2 The Division serves as the lead unit for United Nations electoral assistance. Its core functions are as follows:

(a) Advising and assisting the Under-Secretary-General in his or her capacity as the focal point for United Nations electoral assistance activities;

(b) Reviewing requests for electoral assistance programmes and advising on their implementation;

(c) Assisting the focal point with coordination within and outside the United Nations system and ensuring system-wide coherence and consistency in responding to requests from Member States for electoral assistance;

(d) Coordinating and providing support to the activities of other international observers;

(e) Undertaking needs-assessment missions to determine the specific needs of a country requesting such assistance;

(f) Establishing an institutional memory to generate lessons learned and policy advice to ensure the quality and consistency of the assistance rendered to Member States organizing elections;

(g) Developing and maintaining a roster of international experts who could provide technical assistance, as well as assistance in the verification of electoral processes;

(h) Maintaining contact with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to ensure appropriate working arrangements with them;

(i) Developing regional networks of electoral organizations as instruments for the coordination of activities and for the exchange of expertise at the regional level;

(j) Preparing the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the activities of the United Nations to enhance the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections.

Section 9
Security Council Affairs Division

9.1 The Security Council Affairs Division is headed by a Director who is accountable to Assistant Secretary-General I.

9.2 The Division consists of four organizational units, namely, the Security Council Secretariat Branch, the Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch, the Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch and the Military Staff Committee Secretariat. Each branch is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the Director.

9.3 The core functions of the Security Council Secretariat Branch are as follows:

(a) Providing substantive support and secretariat services to the work of the Council, including formal meetings, the standing subsidiary organs of the Council dealing with matters of procedure, informal consultations and informal working groups;

(b) Maintaining necessary liaison with the members and non-members of the Council and other departments and offices in the Secretariat, as well as with organs and organizations of the United Nations system;

(c) Preparing the daily summaries of the Council's activities for the Secretary-General;

(d) Preparing the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly;

(e) Processing and issuing reports of the Secretary-General and communications received from the Secretary-General and Member and non-member States as Council documents;

(f) Handling and periodically issuing a list of official correspondence and communications received from non-governmental organizations and individuals relating to matters of which the Security Council is seized and in accordance with the appendix to the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council.

9.4 The core functions of the Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch are as follows:

(a) Providing substantive support and secretariat services to the subsidiary organs of the Security Council, including the Sanctions Committees;

(b) Drafting reports of the subsidiary organs to the Security Council, as required;

(c) Identifying, recruiting and providing administrative and substantive support to consultants who serve as members on panels of experts established by the Security Council to monitor implementation and other aspects of the Council's sanctions regimes;

(d) Preparing analyses and assessments of questions relating to the work of the Security Council or the subsidiary organs, as requested;

(e) Monitoring developments in the area of sanctions, including those relating to Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations;

(f) Receiving de-listing requests from petitioners (individual(s), groups, undertakings, and/or entities on the Sanctions Committees lists that are subject to the targeted sanctions measures of the Council) and performing the tasks described in the annex to Security Council resolution 1730 (2006);

(g) Maintaining liaison with delegations and with other organizations of the United Nations system;

(h) Providing contributions to other departments and offices on issues related to the work of the relevant subsidiary organs of the Security Council;

(i) Processing communications and applications received from States and organizations in connection with matters falling within the purview of the subsidiary organ concerned.

9.5 The core functions of the Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch are as follows:

(a) Preparing the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, an official record of the proceedings of the Security Council;

(b) Preparing analytical studies on the interpretation and application of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisional rules of procedure of the Security

Council for the President and members of the Security Council, as well as for the wider membership and the Secretariat, as required;

(c) Providing substantive support and secretariat services to the Security Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions;

(d) Cooperating with the Office of Legal Affairs regarding the publication of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

9.6 The core functions of the Military Staff Committee Secretariat are as follows:

Providing secretariat support and advice to the Military Staff Committee in the preparation for, conduct of and action arising from the Committee's meetings.

Section 10
Decolonization Unit

10.1 The Decolonization Unit is headed by a Chief who is accountable to Assistant Secretary-General II. The Chief is responsible for managing the Unit and for ensuring adequate division of responsibilities among staff. The Chief is assisted by a Senior Political Affairs Officer who stands in for the Chief when the Chief is absent and who has lead responsibilities for staffing, budget and other core administrative duties.

10.2 The core functions of the Decolonization Unit are as follows:

(a) Providing substantive support to the Special Committee of 24 and its visiting and other missions, as well as to the General Assembly, when they review issues relating to decolonization;

(b) Undertaking research and analytical studies and reporting on conditions in the 17 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(c) Providing assistance to the Special Committee in the preparation of its reports to the General Assembly;

(d) Collecting, reviewing and disseminating basic materials, studies and articles relating to decolonization;

(e) Promoting, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, a publicity campaign on decolonization;

(f) Promoting flows of assistance from specialized agencies and institutions associated with the United Nations to the people in the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(g) Providing the required substantive services to the Trusteeship Council and assisting in preparing the reports of the Trusteeship Council if it should meet, in accordance with its rules of procedure;

(h) Preparing studies on relevant articles of the Charter for the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

Section 11
Division for Palestinian Rights

11.1 The Division for Palestinian Rights is headed by a Chief who is accountable to Assistant Secretary-General II. The Chief is responsible for managing the Division and for ensuring adequate division of responsibilities among staff. The Chief is assisted by a Senior Political Affairs Officer who stands in when he/she is absent and who has lead responsibilities for staffing, budget and other core administrative duties.

11.2 The core functions of the Division for Palestinian Rights are as follows:

(a) Assisting the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the delivery of its mandate and in the promotion and implementation of its recommendations;

(b) Providing substantive support and secretariat services for the Committee and its Bureau;

(c) Planning, organizing and servicing the Committee's programme of international meetings and conferences in various regions, with the participation of all sectors of the international community;

(d) Maintaining liaison and cooperation with civil society;

(e) Preparing and disseminating publications and information materials on various aspects of the question of Palestine;

(f) Maintaining, developing and expanding the web-based United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL) and the "Question of Palestine" website maintained by the Division;

(g) Organizing the annual observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and an annual exhibit on Palestinian rights or a cultural event;

(h) Conducting an annual training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority.

Section 12
Executive Office

12.1 The Executive Office is headed by an Executive Officer who is accountable to the Under-Secretary-General.

12.2 The core functions of the Office are set out in section 7 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5.

Section 13
Final provisions

13.1 The present bulletin shall enter into force on 1 October 2009.

13.2 Secretary-General's bulletin of 15 May 2000, entitled "Organization of the Department of Political Affairs" (ST/SGB/2000/10), is hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon
Secretary-General